



**THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION MEDIA EXPOSURE ON  
COGNITIVE PROCESSING AND PERCEIVED APPEAL  
OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN CHINA**



**BY  
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### Abstract

This study mainly discusses the influence of television as a media on the audience's cognitive process and perceived appeal in the dissemination of information. By portraying certain narratives, images, and emotions, television helps viewers process information about the world, including travel destinations. Through carefully crafted advertising and reality shows, television can shape the public's perception of a particular location, giving potential visitors a glimpse of new experiences they may not have previously considered. This study attempts to fill the research gap on how various demographic factors influence the way individuals process and respond to media content in travel destinations by exploring the relationship between television media exposure, cognitive processes, and the perceived appeal of different demographic groups to travel destinations. The target population of this study is Chinese people aged 18-35. Quantitative research method and structured sampling method are adopted to conduct a questionnaire survey on 400 selected target samples. Meanwhile, statistical methods such as regression analysis and correlation analysis are used to analyze the data.

The findings suggest that TV media exposure has a greater impact on the cognitive processes and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, especially for viewers aged 18-35 who enjoy traveling and have a habit of watching TV. In terms of TV media exposure, the usage habits and frequency of TV media significantly affect the information processing of tourist destinations (mean=3.07, SD=1.02). The images, stories and plots of the tourist destination can convey various information, which will affect the audience in the perception process (mean=3.02, SD=0.99). Visual and auditory stimuli have a positive impact on the cognitive processing of the public and thus on the perceived appeal of tourist destinations (mean=3.02, SD=0.99). These results emphasize that television media, as an important tool to shape the tourism market, can optimize the promotion strategy of tourism destinations, stimulate the actual tourism behavior of the audience, and become an important power source to promote the development of tourism destinations. Based on these results, it is recommended to design differentiated content to meet the needs of different ages, improve the quality of programs, develop long-term cooperation plans with the tourism sector, and integrate digital platforms for promotion. In the future, data analysis can also be used to optimize communication strategies and TV program structures, integrate sustainable tourism concepts into media content, and promote the long-term development of tourism destinations.

(Total 78 pages)

Keywords: Television Media Exposure, Tourist Destinations, Cognitive Processes,  
 Perceived Appeal

Student's Signature ..... Thesis Advisor's Signature .....

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

With the development of modern technology and the advent of the digital age, media has become a fundamental part of everyday life. Whether it's entertainment, education, or communication, media influences how people perceive and interpret the world around them (McQuail, 2010; Meyrowitz, 1985). One of the most significant aspects of media's influence lies in its ability to shape public perception, a process crucial for various industries, including tourism (Couldry & Hepp, 2017). As technology advances, the traditional role of media has evolved, and it has permeated all aspects of life, transforming how people consume information, make decisions, and form opinions (Jenkins, 2006). At the core of this influence is television, which, despite the rise of new digital platforms, remains a powerful and credible medium for mass communication, particularly in reaching broad audiences across diverse demographics (Livingstone, 2004).

Television, as a form of media, holds a special place in the dissemination of information. Its visual and auditory capabilities provide a multi-sensory experience that engages audiences in a way that few other mediums can match (McLuhan, 1964). When it comes to shaping public perception, television media's role is vital. By portraying certain narratives, images, and emotions, television helps viewers process information about the world, including tourist destinations (Bryant & Oliver, 2009). Through well-crafted advertisements and reality shows, television can shape public opinion about specific places, giving potential tourists a glimpse into new experiences they may not have previously considered (Tukachinsky, 2013).

The tourism industry, in particular, has long relied on television as a tool for promoting destinations to a broad audience. A prime example of this is New Zealand's long-running "100% Pure New Zealand" campaign, which debuted in 1999. This campaign used stunning visuals to showcase New Zealand's natural beauty, outdoor adventure opportunities, and vibrant culture (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2004). By creating a compelling image of the country, television media helped transform New Zealand into a highly sought-after travel destination for adventure seekers and nature lovers (Tourism New Zealand, 2019). Similarly, China's Hunan Satellite TV reality show *Dad, Where Are We Going?* contributed to the popularity of several rural tourist destinations by featuring them as filming locations (Zhao, 2015). The success of these media-driven campaigns demonstrates the potential of television to significantly influence the cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Cognitive processing refers to the mental processes involved in receiving, storing, and recalling information. When people watch television, they engage in cognitive processing to make sense of the content (Shrum, 2009). This is particularly relevant when it comes to tourist destinations, as television media presents information in ways that are often carefully crafted to evoke emotional responses. By showing scenic landscapes, cultural highlights, and other appealing features, television helps audiences process the information and form favorable opinions about potential travel spots (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). This process is enhanced through storytelling techniques and high-quality visuals that engage viewers on both emotional and intellectual levels (Zillmann, 2000).

One of the most critical aspects of television's influence is its ability to frame information in ways that shape how audiences understand and interpret it. According to framing theory, media doesn't just present information neutrally—it actively influences how viewers perceive that information by emphasizing certain aspects over others (Entman, 1993). When it comes to tourism, this means that television programs and commercials have the power to highlight particular features of a destination whether it's the landscape, cultural heritage, or adventure opportunities while downplaying other

aspects (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002). This selective presentation affects how viewers cognitively process the information and, ultimately, how they perceive the appeal of a destination (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

The visual power of television, coupled with its broad accessibility, makes it a dominant force in shaping public perceptions (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1986). For example, the New Zealand campaign mentioned earlier utilized breathtaking visuals of the country's landscapes and outdoor activities, positioning New Zealand as a top destination for adventure tourism (Tourism New Zealand, 2019). These images were not just informative—they were emotionally impactful, helping to form a vivid mental image in the minds of viewers, which, in turn, influenced their travel decisions (Govers, Go, & Kumar, 2007). By combining visual storytelling with emotionally resonant narratives, television media can make a destination appear more attractive and engaging, thereby increasing its perceived appeal (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

However, the impact of television on cognitive processing and perceived appeal isn't limited to short-term effects. While immediate reactions to television commercials or shows may drive initial interest in a destination, long-term exposure to television media can have lasting effects on how viewers perceive certain places (Morgan, 2012). Continuous exposure to a particular narrative about a destination reinforces the audience's cognitive framework, making it more likely that they will retain positive associations with that destination (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). This is especially true for high-impact campaigns that maintain consistency in their messaging over time (Shrum, 2009). As a result, television media doesn't just generate immediate interest—it can help establish a lasting, positive image of a destination in the minds of viewers (Govers et al., 2007).

Despite the undeniable influence of television media, there remain gaps in the research concerning how various demographic factors such as age, gender, and cultural background affect the way individuals process and respond to media content about tourist destinations (Zhao, 2015). Most existing studies focus on narrow populations or specific regions, limiting the generalizability of their findings (McQuail, 2010).

Moreover, while the short-term effects of television media exposure on audience perceptions have been widely studied, less is known about the long-term impact of repeated exposure on viewers' attitudes and behaviors toward tourist destinations (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

This study seeks to fill those gaps by exploring the relationship between television media exposure, cognitive processing, and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations across diverse demographic groups. By examining how different viewers process information, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how television influences travel behavior and destination choices (Couldry & Hepp, 2017). Through this analysis, we can gain valuable insights into how television media campaigns can be optimized to enhance the attractiveness of tourist destinations, ultimately driving tourism growth and development (Morgan, 2012).

In conclusion, television media remains a critical tool for influencing public perceptions of tourist destinations. Its combination of visual storytelling, emotional engagement, and broad reach makes it uniquely suited to promoting travel and tourism (Shrum, 2009). By shaping how viewers cognitively process information and perceive the appeal of different destinations, television media plays a pivotal role in driving tourism interest (Kim & Richardson, 2003). As we continue to navigate the digital age, it is essential to recognize the lasting influence that traditional media, particularly television, has on shaping public perceptions and behavior (McQuail, 2010).

## **1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to deepen our understanding of how television media exposure impacts cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. In today's media-saturated environment, where content significantly shapes public perception, this research addresses several critical aspects. Firstly, it contributes to tourism marketing by examining the relationship between television exposure and cognitive processing. This exploration can yield valuable insights for tourism marketers, allowing them to tailor their strategies based on how

different demographics respond to media content. Such targeted marketing efforts can significantly drive tourism growth, as evidenced by previous studies (Kim & Richardson, 2003; Morgan et al., 2004).

Furthermore, this research seeks to fill existing gaps in the literature, which has primarily focused on the short-term effects of media exposure. There has been limited exploration of its long-term impacts on travel behavior and destination perceptions (Zhao, 2015). By investigating the effects of sustained television exposure, this study aims to bridge this gap, examining how such exposure shapes cognitive frameworks and long-term attitudes toward tourist destinations (Govers et al., 2007).

In addition, the study delves into how narrative techniques and visual elements affect perception can enhance media effects and cognitive processing theory (Shrum, 2009; Zillmann, 2000). The analysis will include demographic factors, such as age, gender, and cultural background, to highlight the diversity of audience responses. This aspect of the research aims to inform more inclusive media strategies that resonate with varied audiences (McQuail, 2010).

Moreover, the findings may have practical implications for media production, enabling content creators to craft programming that maximizes audience emotional connection. By recognizing how storytelling and visual representation shape perceptions, producers can enhance the appeal of the tourist destinations featured in their content (Bryant & Oliver, 2009; Tukachinsky, 2013).

Lastly, this research will investigate the long-term impacts of media narratives on public perception, contributing to our understanding of how television shapes enduring views of tourist destinations. This insight is crucial for both policymakers and marketers focused on fostering sustainable tourism practices (Morgan, 2012; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). In conclusion, this study not only aims to enrich academic discourse surrounding media effects and tourism but also aspires to provide practical recommendations for stakeholders in the tourism industry. By exploring the interplay between television media exposure, cognitive processing, and perceived destination



appeal, the research has the potential to significantly influence future tourism marketing strategies and media content production.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on the study, the following 3 research questions are proposed.

1.3.1 RQ 1: How does exposure to Chinese television media influence on viewers process information about tourist destinations?

1.3.2 RQ 2: What is the relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations?

1.3.3 RQ 3: How does Chinese television media exposure influence on the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations?

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study mainly focuses on the influence of media exposure, the correlation between media and perceived appeal, and the moderating role of audience engagement.

1.4.1 RO 1: To explore the influence of exposure to Chinese television media on viewers process information about tourist destinations.

1.4.2 RO 2: To investigate the relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations.

1.4.3 RO 3: To analyze how Chinese television media exposure influence on the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

## 1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study investigated the influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations in China.

1.5.1 The study analyzed the effects of television media exposure on cognitive processes in China, exploring the extent and nature of viewers' exposure to various types of programming, including travel shows, documentaries, and advertisements, to determine how these formats impacted their understanding and attitudes toward travel destinations. Additionally, the research delved into the cognitive mechanisms through which viewers processed the information presented, analyzing how different narrative techniques and visual elements influenced interpretation and retention.

1.5.2 The study assessed how television media exposure affected the perceived appeal and desirability of various destinations, considering factors like emotional appeal and representation. A significant focus was placed on examining how emotional connections and active participation mediated the relationship between media exposure and perceived appeal, while addressing the diversity of audience responses across demographic groups.

1.5.3 Ultimately, the study aimed to provide insights for tourism marketers by analyzing the interplay between media exposure, cognitive processing, and destination appeal. The findings could lead to more effective marketing strategies and sustainable tourism practices. This research aspired to fill existing gaps in the literature on media effects and tourism, contributing to a deeper understanding of these interrelated fields and offering practical recommendations for stakeholders in the tourism industry.

## 1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Television Media Exposure** refers to the extent and nature of viewers' engagement with television programming related to tourist destinations. It includes



various formats such as travel shows, documentaries, and advertisements, which shape viewers' perceptions and attitudes toward travel.

**Cognitive Processing** refers to the mental mechanisms by which individuals interpret, analyze, and retain information presented through television media. This includes understanding how narrative techniques, visual elements, and storytelling methods influence the way viewers perceive and remember information about tourist destinations.

**Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destinations** refers to viewers' subjective evaluations of the attractiveness and desirability of different tourist destinations as influenced by television media. Factors such as emotional resonance, aesthetic qualities, and overall representation in media content play a crucial role in shaping these perceptions.

**Tourist Destination** refers to a specific place or area where a tourist goes to carry out a tourist activity. It can be a city, a country, a region, or a place where a scenic spot or attractive natural or human resources are located. Tourist destinations usually attract tourists with their unique attractions: natural landscapes, historical sites, cultural activities, shopping places, food. And meet their travel needs. At the same time, the tourist destination should also have good infrastructure and convenient transportation conditions to provide tourists with a meaningful experience.

## 1.7 ADVANTAGES OF STUDY

1.7.1 This study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding how television media shapes viewers' perceptions of tourist destinations. By examining the cognitive processes involved in media consumption, it sheds light on the mechanisms through which television influences audience attitudes and behaviors. This understanding is crucial for both academia and practitioners in the tourism industry, enabling them to better grasp the complexities of audience engagement and media effects.

1.7.2 The findings from this research can provide valuable insights for tourism marketers looking to develop effective strategies. By identifying how different demographic groups respond to television content, marketers can tailor their campaigns to resonate more deeply with target audiences. This approach not only enhances the effectiveness of marketing efforts but also has the potential to drive increased tourism to featured destinations.

1.7.3 Unlike much existing research that primarily addresses short-term media effects, this study aims to explore the long-term impacts of television exposure on destination perceptions. By examining how repeated viewing influences cognitive frameworks and sustained attitudes, the research fills a critical gap in the literature. This knowledge can assist in creating more effective media campaigns that cultivate lasting positive associations with tourist destinations.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the study “The Influence of Television Media Exposure on Cognitive Processing and Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destinations: A Study of Audience Engagement and Media Effects in China”, the researcher has studied the concept, theory and related research as a guideline for research as follows.

- 2.1 Concept of Media Exposure
- 2.2 Cognitive Processing Theory
- 2.3 Concept of Perception
- 2.4 Tourist Destination in China
- 2.5 Related Research Studies
- 2.6 Conceptual Framework

#### **2.1 CONCEPT OF MEDIA EXPOSURE**

Media exposure is a pivotal concept in understanding how information is absorbed, processed, and eventually influences audience perceptions and actions. At its core, media exposure refers to the frequency and duration of interaction an audience has with media content, which can shape both conscious and subconscious aspects of cognition. In the context of this study, media exposure is examined through Chinese television, a medium that reaches audiences with curated visual and auditory content designed to impact perception, understanding, and ultimately the desirability of tourist destinations.

Despite the rise of digital and interactive media platforms, television remains one of the main sources of media influence in China. The power of television media in this region is rooted in its capacity to broadcast information repeatedly, thereby enhancing exposure and creating long-lasting effects on audience cognition and

perception. This repetitive interaction with media content helps to establish a mental framework that affects how viewers process new information (Atkin, 2010). Consequently, media exposure to television programming focused on tourism often emphasizes picturesque visuals, narrations, and positive testimonials that increase the perceived appeal of destinations.

A significant portion of media effects literature discusses the mechanisms by which prolonged or repeated media exposure influences perceptions, often referred to as the cultivation effect. According to Shoemaker and Danisewitz (2009), exposure frequency plays a crucial role in shaping the audience's worldview, especially when the content pertains to repeated themes such as idealized tourist spots or cultural landmarks. Media that emphasizes certain destination features such as luxury, natural beauty, or cultural allure repeatedly reinforces these attributes in viewers' minds, which contributes to a cultivated perception that influences the perceived appeal of these locations.

Further, media exposure is not merely about viewing frequency but also about the cognitive engagement that such exposure fosters. For instance, frequent exposure to a particular type of content can intensify a viewer's sense of familiarity and emotional connection, creating a form of media resonance that can heighten appeal. According to Atkin (2010), the narrative, visual storytelling, and emotive elements of television can trigger psychological processes, prompting the audience to form emotional connections with the depicted destinations. This emotional engagement plays a fundamental role in shaping their desire to visit the advertised locations, thus bridging the gap between exposure and appeal.

The cognitive impact of media exposure extends to how audiences interpret and evaluate the destination information they encounter. With each exposure, viewers are subconsciously gathering data and refining their perception based on what is portrayed through media narratives. As Shoemaker and Danisewitz (2009) suggest, the cultivation process implies that audiences exposed to idealized television representations of destinations tend to develop a perception that aligns with these

portrayals, often leading to heightened destination appeal. Through this lens, television media not only informs but also subtly shapes the cognitive processing of tourism information by crafting an appealing and persuasive image that captivates viewers.

A related concept within the field of media exposure is selective exposure, which posits that audiences engage with media content that aligns with their interests, attitudes, or pre-existing biases. This selective process means that viewers with a predisposition toward travel or cultural exploration may be more likely to seek out television programs that feature tourist destinations, thereby amplifying the exposure effect. Selective exposure thus operates alongside general media exposure to reinforce positive perceptions of destinations, as viewers continuously gravitate toward content that satisfies their curiosity and desire for new experiences.

Television media exposure also encourages the development of parasocial interactions, wherein audiences form a perceived connection with on-screen personalities or narrators. These interactions can significantly influence cognitive processing, as viewers are more inclined to trust and value information conveyed by familiar hosts or popular influencers. For instance, when a well-known television personality endorses a tourist destination, audiences may perceive the location as more appealing and trustworthy. This parasocial influence builds credibility and strengthens the overall effect of media exposure on the viewer's perception and evaluation of the featured destinations (Atkin, 2010).

In conclusion, the concept of media exposure encompasses multiple layers, from the frequency and intensity of content engagement to the cognitive and emotional responses elicited by that content. In China, where television remains one of the main mediums for disseminating tourism information, exposure to well-crafted content can significantly shape the cognitive processes associated with the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. By engaging viewers through narrative storytelling, emotional appeal, and the cultivation of parasocial relationships, television media serves as a powerful tool for influencing audience perceptions, thus enhancing the attractiveness of featured destinations and driving tourism interest. This exploration of media exposure



within the context of Chinese television underscores the medium's substantial role in shaping public perceptions, offering insights into how continuous, targeted exposure can mold both the mindset and behaviors of audiences in the tourism domain.

## **2.2 COGNITIVE PROCESSING THEORY**

Cognitive processing theory is a theoretical framework that discusses how humans acquire, organize, store and use information. It is widely used in psychology, education and communication. The core of the theory is that after receiving external information, individuals will experience a series of complex psychological processing, thus forming their cognition and attitude towards things. Cognitive processing theory focuses on the process of information from external input to memory storage and use, including attention, understanding, memory, evaluation and decision making, and also emphasizes the influence of processing depth and complexity on information effect ( Craik & Lockhart, 1972). In this study, cognitive processing theory can help to understand how viewers construct their impressions and views on a tourist destination through visual and linguistic information of TV media, and form the cognitive and perceived appeal of the tourist destination.

Despite the rise of digital and interactive media platforms, television remains one of the main sources of media influence in China. Through the transmission of multi-sensory (visual, auditory) information, television media provides a rich source of stimulating information for the cognitive processing of the audience. Different types of TV programs will produce different types of content expressions, such as tourism programs, advertisements, documentaries, movies and TV dramas, etc. Their episodic narration and visual images will trigger different cognitive responses of the audience. Cognition is not determined by the structural transfer between short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory (LTM), but by how deeply the information is processed during processing. (Craik & Lockhart, 1972) Vivid pictures, background music and commentary can quickly attract the audience's attention and enhance the audience's understanding and memory. The high frequency exposure of TV programs can also enhance the depth of memory of the destination image and strengthen the audience's

sense of familiarity and positive attitude. As Craik and Lockhart study, the deeper the cognitive processing, the more lasting the memory, and the more profound the impact on the viewer's mind. Cognitive processes depend not only on whether information is encoded, but also on the investment of attention and cognitive resources. Shallow processing tends to require less attention, while deep processing requires more resources. In the process of deep processing, information establishes more connections with existing knowledge, thus enhancing the persistence of memory. As the main source of information input, TV media can attract the audience's attention and stimulate emotional resonance through deep processing of information, and affect the audience's cognitive processing results.

Generally speaking, cognitive processing theory is widely used in the analysis of the formation mechanism of destination cognitive image. The cognitive image of the destination is significantly affected by external information sources (such as media content), and television media, as a visual channel for information transmission, can effectively attract the audience's attention and promote memory storage through multi-sensory stimulation (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). It also shows that TV media needs to attract viewers' attention through creative expression, which also includes showing spectacular images of natural landscapes, or celebrity endorsements and destinations in the scenes of popular movies and TV series. This high-quality distribution of attention ensures that the audience becomes interested in the key features of the destination. At the same time, through media narration or situational interpretation, the audience can more easily understand the uniqueness of the destination, such as cultural customs, activity experience or historical background, which will also help deepen the audience's cognitive concreteness of the destination and enhance its attractiveness. The use of sensory information (visual images, sounds) through repeated playback also helps to enhance the audience's memory of the destination image, and some negative stereotypes of tourist destinations may also be strengthened or dispelling through media communication. Through cognitive processing, the audience will form a cognitive framework or image about the destination. Finally, through the positive evaluation (such as the safety, friendly atmosphere, unique experience, natural beauty, etc.) and the negative evaluation (such as potential risks, distance, etc.) presented in the TV media,



the audience will make emotional evaluation of the destination information according to the existing experience and belief in the cognitive process. The results of the cognitive evaluation will also directly affect the perceived appeal and attitude of the destination, and decide whether to include the destination in the tourism plan.

Under the framework of cognitive processing theory, the information input stage is the starting point of the whole cognitive process, which determines whether the external stimulus can be paid attention to and further processed by the individual. The information input stage is a process in which an individual initially processes information based on the characteristics of the stimulus and the allocation of cognitive resources after receiving the external information stimulus. The primary task of the information input stage is to attract the individual's attention. Attention is the "entrance" to cognitive processing, and information without attention cannot enter further comprehension or memory. Due to the limited cognitive resources of human beings (Schneider & Shiffrin, 1977), the key to the information input stage is selective attention, that is, giving priority to the content related to one's own needs or interests in the complex information environment. For tourist destination information in TV media, vivid pictures, novel themes and emotional narrative methods can significantly improve the audience's attention level (Lang, 2000), and create a good information background for subsequent research.

Memory and image storage stage is an important link in the process of information cognitive processing, which follows the process of information input and understanding, and is the key stage to determine whether an individual can effectively store and recall information. For the study of the influence of TV media on tourist destination, this stage plays a crucial role in forming the cognitive image of the destination. In television media, destination information is usually presented through the diversification of visual and narrative content, which triggers the audience's emotional and cognitive responses, thus forming memories. The memory and image storage stage is not only the process of preserving information, but also involves how individuals store elements such as characteristics, culture and uniqueness of the destination in memory, so as to construct the overall image of the destination. If the

diversified presentation of TV media triggers the audience's emotional response or is related to the audience's interest points, the cognitive processing of information will be deepened, and the audience will be more likely to have a positive impression on the tourist destination.

The stages of emotion and attraction perception are the key stages for individuals to process information, evaluate information and make emotional responses. This stage involves not only the emotional processing of external information, but also how individuals form perceived appeal to specific stimuli (such as tourist destinations) based on emotional responses. For the study of the influence of TV media on tourist destination perception, emotional response plays an important role in this stage, directly affecting the audience's perceived attraction to the destination. According to Fiske's (2002) social evaluation theory, an individual's attraction to a tourist destination is not only based on rational analysis, but also deeply influenced by emotional evaluation. Emotional media presentation, especially through visual and narrative techniques to convey the beauty and uniqueness of the destination, can stimulate the audience's emotional response such as pleasure, expectation or curiosity, thus enhancing the attractiveness of the destination. By analyzing viewers' emotional responses, the study can reveal how television media shape destination images and promote the perception of attraction through emotional appeals.

Overall, cognitive processing theory provides a comprehensive perspective that explains how television media exposure shapes viewers' cognitive framework of tourist destinations through cognitive processes (attention, understanding, memory, evaluation, and construction) and further influences perceived appeal and behavioral decisions. This theoretical framework can not only reveal the effect mechanism of media content, but also provide theoretical guidance for optimizing the media marketing strategy of tourism destinations.

## 2.3 THEORY/CONCEPT OF PERCEPTION

Perception refers to the process of receiving external stimuli through the senses (vision, hearing, touch, taste, smell, etc.) and forming cognition and understanding of these stimuli through brain processing and interpretation. In short, perception is an individual's "interpretation" of the external world, which is not only a response to physical stimuli, but also influenced by many factors such as individual experience, emotion and cultural background. Perception is an important part of the cognitive process that helps individuals receive information from and react to their external environment. Perception is not just a passive response to the real world, but an active process that affects an individual's behavior, emotions, and understanding of the world. In this study, perception means that the audience receives relevant information about the tourist destination through TV media, and thus generates their own understanding and feelings about the destination through cognitive processing.

As a powerful communication medium, television can create compelling images and emotional experiences through the combination of vision and hearing, which can affect the audience's cognition and perceived appeal of tourist destinations. In the process of receiving perception, the first step is that the sensory system (such as sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste) receives the stimuli of the external world. For example, when we see a beautiful landscape in a tourism advertisement, the visual system receives light wave stimulation through the eyes and transmits the image information to the brain. External physical stimuli (such as light, sound, temperature, pressure, etc.) enter the brain through the sensory system for processing. The intensity, duration, and characteristics of the stimulus affect the perceived effect. The sensory organs then convert the physical stimuli they receive into nerve signals that are transmitted by the sensory nervous system to the relevant areas of the brain for processing. Each sense is sensitive to stimuli differently, for example, the human eye is particularly sensitive to light, while the ear is most sensitive to sound stimuli. This sensory difference determines an individual's initial response to a stimulus. The brain then processes and interprets the information it receives. Based on past experiences, memories, situations and cultural backgrounds, the brain selectively processes information, organizes and integrates

information to form an overall perception. For example, when we see an image of a tourist destination, the brain does not simply recognize the image, but also interprets and analyzes it based on personal experience, existing knowledge and cultural background.

After processing the information, the brain judges and interprets the information based on sensory input and internal cognitive framework. This process is not only dependent on sensory input, but is also influenced by cognitive biases, emotions, prior knowledge and other factors. Images of the same tourist destination may have different perceptions due to different personal interests, emotional needs or cultural backgrounds. Individual perception is not a single information processing, but the integration of multiple sensory information (such as visual, auditory) to form a comprehensive understanding of things. For example, when watching a tourism advertisement, the picture (visual stimulation), background music (auditory stimulation), captions (language stimulation) and so on work together, the audience's perception forms the overall attraction of the destination. At the same time, perception is dynamic and can be affected by external environment, social culture and individual emotional state. As the environment changes, individuals may perceive and respond differently to the same stimuli. For example, the perception of a seasonal tourist destination may vary with the seasons (attractive in winter, less obvious in summer).

In daily life, television media conveys various information by displaying images, stories and plots about tourist destinations, and viewers will be affected by perceptual conventions in the process of perception. By repeatedly showing the image of a certain tourist destination, the TV media shapes the "brand image" of the place, and enables the audience to form a certain expectation of it. When they are exposed to the advertisements or programs related to the destination in the future, their perceptual routine will make them more likely to accept and identify with the expected image of the destination. For example, if viewers see an advertisement about a hotel that promotes its "luxury and comfort," their expectations can influence their subsequent perception of the destination. If the AD places too much emphasis on certain elements (such as high-end amenities), the viewer may become oblivious to or biased against other aspects

of the destination (such as the natural landscape). As mentioned in the conventional theory of perception, individual perception is affected by preconceptions, expectations, emotions and other factors, which leads to selective attention and interpretation of external information.

Individual emotions and motivations also play an important role in information processing. (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) Television media stimulate the audience's emotional resonance through emotional content (such as warm family travel pictures, energetic adventure activities), thus affecting their perception of tourist destinations. When TV advertisements or programs present tourist destinations through warm pictures, moving music and other elements, the audience's emotional response will affect their cognitive judgment. If the show presents emotional elements such as family gatherings, couples' vacations, parent-child activities, etc., viewers may be more receptive to these messages and see these destinations as ideal travel choices. Different audiences have different travel motives, and TV media can cater to their expectations by showing tourist destinations that meet the audience's motives, thus enhancing the attraction of the destination. At the same time, the image of tourist destination in TV media often has a strong cultural and social background color. According to the influence of their own cultural background and social environment, the audience will make selective interpretation of the tourist destination information. The cultural background of the audience may affect how they perceive the tourist destination presented by the television media. For example, show certain tourist destinations with historical and cultural heritage, and the audience will interpret this information according to their cultural schema. If they already know the importance or aesthetic value of these places, they are more likely to develop a high degree of identification and interest in the destination.

In conclusion, television media greatly affects the audience's cognition and perception of tourist destinations through the transmission of visual, sound and emotional content, and the full application of the concept and theory of perception can help the audience further deepen the cognitive processing and perception understanding



of the information transmission of television media, so as to create a positive impression on tourist destinations.

## **2.4 TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN CHINA**

Tourist destination is a geographical area or specific place that tourists choose and go to, usually with unique natural landscapes, cultural heritage, historical background, recreational activities and other attractive factors. It is not only the location of tourist activities, but also the area that provides tourist services and infrastructure, and the consumption, entertainment, accommodation and activities of tourists in the area all form part of the tourist experience. The core purpose of a tourist destination is to attract visitors, provide a good experience, and promote the development of the local economy and culture. China, as a country with a rich history, culture and natural landscape, has diversified tourist destinations that attract tourists from all over the world.

The most notable feature of a tourist destination is to have some unique attractions, including natural landscapes, cultural heritage, modern architecture, recreational facilities, etc., and it can also be an activity for tourists to experience including participation (such as cultural experience, adventure tourism, shopping, etc.). The cultural characteristics of the tourist destination is an important factor to attract tourists, and also determines the uniqueness of the destination. At the same time, in order to meet the needs of tourists, tourist destinations usually provide transportation, accommodation, catering, entertainment and other service facilities. Good infrastructure and service levels are crucial to the attractiveness of a tourist destination. At present, according to most scenic spots in the world, tourist destinations can be classified into: natural destination, ecological destination, cultural destination and comprehensive destination. A tourist destination is not only a place for tourists to travel, but also an area that provides comprehensive tourism services, and its attraction comes from multiple factors such as nature, culture and history. In the highly competitive tourism market, the shaping of destination image and experience is particularly important.

As a diversified country, China's tourist destinations are rich and diverse, including historical and cultural heritage, natural landscape, modern cities, holiday resorts and religious and cultural attractions (Zhang & Wang, 2014). Among the historical and cultural tourist destinations, in addition to the well-known tourist cities such as Beijing and Xi 'an, Luoyang in China, as the ancient capital of many dynasties in Chinese history, has rich cultural sites. Longmen Grottoes and White Horse Temple are famous tourist attractions. As the capital of the Six Dynasties and the Ming Dynasty, Nanjing also has a long history of cultural heritage, such as the Mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen, the Nanjing City Wall, and the Fu Zi Temple. Dunhuang, also known as the Mogao Grottoes, is an important historical and cultural site on the Silk Road and is also rich in murals and sculpture art.

Among the tourist destinations in the natural landscape category, Jiuzhaigou Valley in Sichuan Province is a World Natural Heritage site known for its colorful lakes, waterfalls and virgin forest landscape, and is known as "fairyland on earth". Huangshan in Anhui Province, famous for its strange pines, strange rocks, sea of clouds and hot springs, is one of the most famous mountain attractions in China and a world heritage site both natural and cultural. Changbai Mountain in Jilin Province is a famous tourist destination in northeast China, with rich natural landscapes, including Tianchi, hot springs and rich animal and plant resources in Changbai Mountain. As for tourist destinations in modern cities, Shanghai, as the economic center of China, attracts tourists with its modern urban appearance and unique international atmosphere. Famous attractions include the Bund, Oriental Pearl Tower, Nanjing Road Pedestrian Street and so on. As the commercial and cultural center of southern China, Guangzhou has a profound historical and cultural heritage, and is also the representative of a modern city. Famous scenic spots include Pearl River night tour, Guangzhou Tower, Baiyun Mountain and so on. As an important window of China's reform and opening up, Shenzhen not only has a modern urban landscape, but also a wealth of entertainment and leisure facilities. The Window of the World and Happy Valley are important tourist destinations. As the capital of Sichuan Province, Chengdu is known for its laid-back lifestyle, rich food culture and conservation of giant pandas. Jinli Ancient Street, Qingyang Palace, Wuhou Temple and other famous scenic spots. When it comes to



vacation destinations, Sanya is located at the southern tip of Hainan Island and is one of the most famous seaside resorts in China. Scenic spots such as Yalong Bay, Tianya Sea Point and Nanshan Temple attract a large number of tourists to enjoy the sun, sand and sea water. Xiamen, located in Fujian Province, is a coastal city with beautiful scenery. Gulangyu Island is the most famous tourist attraction, besides Xiamen University, South Putuo Temple and other attractions. Finally, regarding religious culture as a tourist destination, Mount Wutai in Shanxi Province is one of the holy sites of Buddhism in China, attracting a large number of believers and tourists with its temples and rich Buddhist cultural heritage. Located in Zhejiang Province, Mount Putuo is one of the four famous Buddhist mountains in China, with rich Buddhist culture and historical sites, and is a pilgrimage site for Buddhist believers and tourists.

As one of the largest tourism markets in the world, China has rich natural resources and profound historical and cultural heritage, and its tourist destinations are also showing diversified development. Faced with such a resource-rich tourism market, tourists can choose different destinations according to their interests and needs, and experience different cultures and landscapes.

## **2.5 RELATED RESEARCH STUDIES**

In examining the influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, it is crucial to delve into related research studies that illuminate the interconnectedness of media consumption and travel behaviors. Various studies have explored how television travel programs shape destination images, influence travel intentions, and affect viewers' cognitive and emotional evaluations of destinations. This literature review synthesizes key findings from recent studies to underscore the significance of television media in shaping tourism perceptions and behaviors, particularly in the Chinese context.

### **2.5.1 Television Media Exposure and Tourist Destinations**

Television has long been recognized as a powerful medium for shaping perceptions and influencing behavior. In the realm of tourism, Chen and Hu (2018) investigated the role of television travel programs in forming destination images and affecting the travel intentions of millennials in China. Their study revealed that exposure to travel programs significantly impacts viewers' perceptions of destinations, highlighting how visual storytelling can create compelling narratives that resonate with potential travelers. By presenting destinations in an engaging and visually appealing manner, television travel programs effectively enhance the attractiveness of various locations, thereby influencing travel intentions among viewers.

Further supporting this notion, Li, J., Xu, and Li, G. (2019) examined the effect of television travel programs on the destination preferences and travel intentions of Chinese tourists. Their findings indicated that exposure to well-crafted travel narratives fosters a sense of familiarity and affinity toward featured destinations. Viewers reported higher travel intentions for locations showcased positively in television programs, demonstrating how media representation can directly affect tourists' decision-making processes. This study underscores the significant role of television as a marketing tool in the tourism industry, influencing not only perceptions but also actual travel behaviors.

Morrison, Liu, and McCleary (2006) developed a model of inspiration to explain how travel television programs influence tourist behavior. Their research illustrated that these programs serve as sources of inspiration, sparking interest and curiosity about travel experiences. By showcasing diverse cultures, activities, and landscapes, travel programs motivate viewers to explore new destinations. This inspirational aspect of television aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, where individuals are encouraged to pursue behaviors—such as travel—through vicarious experiences presented in the media.

### 2.5.2 Cognitive Processing and Perceived Appeal

The cognitive processing of information related to tourist destinations is deeply intertwined with how individuals perceive and evaluate those locations. Bigné, Sánchez-García, and Iniesta-Arandia (2009) examined the roles of cognitive and affective attributes in shaping tourism destination images. Their research found that both cognitive evaluations based on factual information—and affective evaluations rooted in emotional responses play crucial roles in forming destination images. This duality suggests that viewers do not merely process information passively; rather, they engage with it emotionally, further complicating the relationship between media exposure and destination appeal.

Kim, Moon, and Kim (2016) expanded on this idea by investigating the relationship between destination knowledge and tourists' cognitive images and affective evaluations. They found that increased knowledge about a destination enhances cognitive processing and leads to more favorable affective evaluations. This suggests that travel television programs that provide informative content can significantly impact how viewers think about and feel toward various destinations. As viewers gain knowledge through engaging narratives, their cognitive processing deepens, leading to a more nuanced understanding of the destination's appeal.

McIntosh (1999) also highlighted the importance of cognitive evaluation in tourism. His research indicated that how potential tourists assess destinations is influenced by their prior knowledge, media representations, and personal experiences. This understanding of cognitive evaluation is essential for comprehending how television media exposure shapes tourists' perceptions. Viewers' ability to process information effectively can enhance their appreciation of destinations, influencing both their intentions to visit and their emotional responses to those locations.

In conclusion, the body of research surrounding television media exposure and its impact on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations highlights the significant role that media plays in shaping travel intentions and behaviors. From

creating destination images to enhancing viewers' cognitive evaluations, television travel programs have the potential to inspire and influence tourists' decision-making processes. By understanding these dynamics, stakeholders in the tourism industry can leverage television media more effectively to engage audiences and promote desirable travel destinations in China and beyond.

## 2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In exploring the relationship between television media exposure and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations, it is essential to establish a clear conceptual framework that outlines how these two variables interact. This framework focuses on the independent variable, which is “television media exposure” and the dependent variable, which is “the perceived appeal of tourist destinations”. By understanding this relationship, this study can better comprehend how the portrayal of destinations in television media influences viewers’ perceptions and, ultimately, their travel intentions.

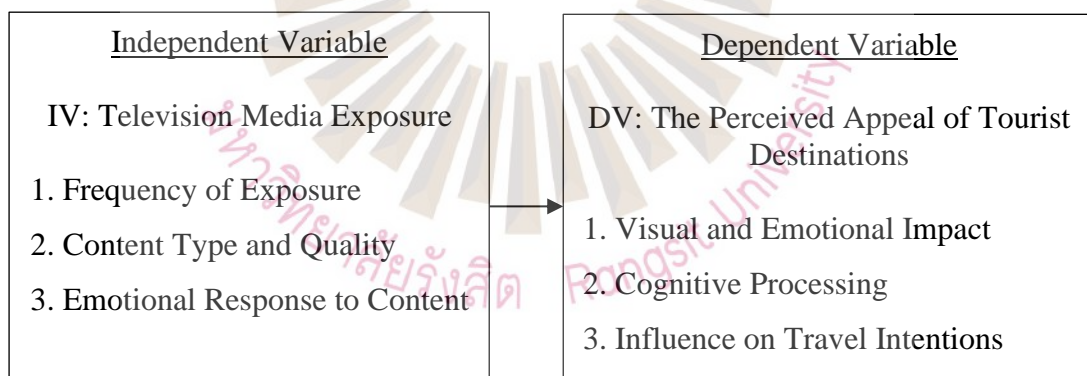


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework posits a direct relationship between television media exposure and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. When viewers are frequently exposed to visually captivating and informative travel programs, they are more likely to develop a positive perception of the destinations featured.

Regarding visual and emotional impact, this study assumes that engaging visuals and compelling storytelling can evoke emotions such as excitement, nostalgia,

or wanderlust. These emotional responses are essential in shaping how viewers perceive the appeal of a destination. For instance, a documentary showcasing breathtaking landscapes or vibrant local cultures can stimulate a viewer's desire to experience those places firsthand.

Regarding cognitive processing, this study assumes that the viewers consume television content, they process the information presented. This cognitive processing involves integrating new knowledge about destinations with existing beliefs and experiences. The more positive and enriching the content, the more likely viewers will form favorable perceptions of the destination.

Regarding influence on travel intentions, this study assumes that the perceived appeal, shaped by television exposure, ultimately influences viewers' travel intentions. When viewers find a destination appealing, they are more likely to consider it in their travel plans, seek additional information, or even share their enthusiasm with others. This ripple effect can lead to increased interest and tourism to those locations.

In conclusion, this conceptual framework illustrates a direct and influential relationship between television media exposure and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. By providing viewers with engaging and informative content, television can significantly enhance their perceptions of various locations, thereby affecting their travel intentions. Understanding this relationship is vital for both media producers and tourism marketers, as it highlights the importance of quality content in shaping audiences' perceptions and fostering interest in travel destinations.

## **2.7 HYPOTHESIS STATEMENTS**

Based on the research questions and objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed to examine the relationship between television media exposure and its effects on cognitive processing, perceived appeal of tourist destinations among Chinese viewers.



Hypothesis 1 (H1): Exposure to Chinese television media significantly influences how viewers process information about tourist destinations.

This hypothesis suggests that higher exposure to travel-related television content leads to increased cognitive engagement, enabling viewers to process information about tourist destinations more deeply.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations.

This hypothesis posits that frequent exposure to visually engaging and informative television programs on tourist destinations enhances viewers' perceived appeal of these destinations, potentially increasing their attractiveness.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Chinese television media exposure significantly influences the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

This hypothesis proposes that exposure to television media shapes the audience's knowledge structure about the destination by affecting the depth of information acquisition, memory and processing in the cognitive process. At the same time, through emotional transmission, aesthetic enhancement and cultural identity, the perceived appeal of the destination is enhanced.

These hypotheses aim to clarify the influence of television media exposure on both cognitive processing and perceived appeal.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In order to study the influence of television media exposure on the cognitive process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, it is necessary to adopt research methodology suitable for this study. This chapter includes research design, research population, samples, sampling, research tools and data collection process. The information is presented as follows.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to obtain more complete and comprehensive information. Quantitative research, which involved systematizing data through numerical values and statistical methods, was used to explore patterns and causality behind the data (Babbie, 2020). The aim was to objectively measure the relationship between variables and test hypotheses to draw generalizable conclusions (Bryman, 2016). In this research, the cognitive processes and perceived appeal of TV media were analyzed, revealing how different groups accepted information. The communication process, which involved complex variables, was examined through quantitative methods, allowing for the transformation of cognitive and perceptual processes into analyzable data. This data provided a detailed understanding of different audience groups' views on the cognitive process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, laying a foundation for further research.

#### **3.2 POPULATION**

According to the latest Chinese census in 2021, the total population of China was 1,411.78 million (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021). For the objectives of this study, which aimed to examine the impact of TV media exposure on the cognitive



process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, the target age group was set to include individuals aged 18-35. This group represented approximately 266 million people in China. Adults aged 18 or older were typically able to travel independently, using means of transportation such as planes and high-speed trains, and could stay in hotels on their own, allowing them the freedom to travel based on personal preferences. Additionally, this group generally exhibited a positive attitude toward TV media, maintained a regular usage frequency, and possessed travel experience, making them an ideal sample for the study.

### 3.3 SAMPLES

In this study, to determine a representative sample size from this large population, Taro Yamane's formula was applied with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level. This statistical method allows for accurate sample representation in large populations while controlling sampling errors. Yamane's formula is as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2} \quad (3-1)$$

n = sample size

N = population size

e = margin of error (expressed as a decimal)

Given:

N = 266,000,000

Margin of error = 0.05

The ideal sample size was calculated to be approximately 400 participants. This sample size provides sufficient representation for analysis and allows for generalizable findings regarding the research population's responses to media exposure.

Therefore, the required sample size in this study is 400 participants.

### **3.4 SAMPLING**

To examine the influence of television media exposure on the cognitive process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, a structured sampling method will be used to ensure reliable data. The target samples for this study comprises individuals aged 18-35 in China, who are estimated to number approximately 266 million according to the 2021 Chinese census (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021). This age group will be selected due to their greater independence and mobility, as they typically have the freedom to travel and can make independent decisions regarding transportation and accommodation. Additionally, they maintain regular engagement with television media, which makes them an ideal group for analyzing the impact of media exposure on tourism perceptions.

### **3.5 SCREENING CRITERIA**

In order to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the study, a further sampling process was applied to select participants who meet specific criteria aligned with the study's objectives. The target audience was refined based on the following requirements.

#### **3.5.1 Age Range**

Participants are required to be between 18-35 years old. This age group was chosen for its mobility and independence in travel decision-making, making them suitable for studying tourism-related media impact.

#### **3.5.2 Interest in Tourism**

Participants should have a strong interest in tourism, with prior experience in domestic travel. This criterion helps ensure that the participants have relevant background knowledge and experiences, allowing for more accurate analysis of

perceptions related to tourist destinations.

### **3.5.3 Television Viewing Habits**

Participants should have regular TV viewing habits. This criterion ensures that the target audience has sufficient exposure to TV media promotional content, making them more likely to have formed perceptions about tourist destinations through television.

To facilitate the recruitment of a sample that meets these specific criteria, various Chinese social applications, such as Mafengwo and RED, will be used as platforms for participant recruitment. These applications, popular among young adults interested in travel, allow access to a well-targeted audience and enable the collection of detailed and relevant information for the study. This approach ensures a focused and appropriate sample for analyzing the impact of TV media exposure on the cognitive process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

## **3.6 RESEARCH TOOLS**

To systematically explore how television media exposure impacted the cognitive process and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, this study employed a quantitative research method. The primary research tool used in this study was a questionnaire, designed to collect standardized data from a large sample of individuals. Questionnaires were valuable for gathering information on specific groups' attitudes, behaviors, characteristics, and opinions, providing a robust foundation for analyzing and summarizing trends (Bryman, 2016).

The questionnaire was divided into four sections to ensure comprehensive data collection. The first section gathered demographic information about the respondents, allowing an understanding of their background. The second section focused on respondents' TV viewing habits, specifically how they engaged with travel-related content. The third and fourth sections captured insights into respondents' cognitive

processes related to media exposure and their perceptions of destination appeal. The fifth part collected opinions and comments on the subject and content of the research.

The questionnaire was distributed via WeChat, which is widely used in China, to reach respondents effectively. This platform allowed for timely and accurate distribution, ensuring that all participants received the questionnaire promptly and could easily complete it. This method facilitated data collection from a large and relevant sample, providing a reliable basis for analyzing how television media exposure influenced tourist destination perceptions among young adults in China.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH MEASUREMENT**

This study utilized a quantitative data collection approach to investigate how exposure to Chinese television media influenced viewers' cognitive processing and perceptions of tourist destinations. The data collection tool was a structured questionnaire, which was designed to capture various dimensions of the research questions and objectives. The questionnaire was distributed via WeChat to ensure efficient and timely access for Chinese respondents, allowing for broad and representative data collection within the target demographic.

The questionnaire consists of four main parts.

#### **3.7.1 Part 1: Demographic Information**

This part gathers essential background information about participants, such as age, education level, and travel experience. These variables help contextualize the responses and allow for deeper analysis of different demographic influences on cognitive processing and destination appeal.

### **3.7.2 Part 2: Television Media Exposure**

This part measures participants' frequency and engagement with television content related to travel and tourism, specifically targeting their exposure to Chinese television media. Respondents are asked about the types of travel programs they watch, viewing frequency, and the types of tourist destinations showcased. This data helps assess how exposure intensity may impact their cognitive processing and perceived appeal of destinations.

### **3.7.3 Part 3: Cognitive Processing**

This part examines how participants process information about tourist destinations presented on television. Using Likert-scale questions, the questionnaire assesses aspects such as attention to content, memory of details, and critical engagement with the media. This allows for an analysis of how cognitive engagement with media influences perceptions of tourist destinations.

### **3.7.4 Part 4: Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destinations**

In the final part, respondents rate the attractiveness of various destinations based on their exposure to television media. The questions in this section focus on emotional responses, visual appeal, and overall desirability of destinations as shaped by television exposure. Additionally, questions regarding future travel intentions are included to explore whether perceived appeal translates into actual travel planning.

The responses from these sections are measured on a 5-point Likert scale, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the intensity of respondents' perceptions and attitudes. By quantifying responses, the study can analyze correlations and test hypotheses regarding the influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal. This structured measurement approach provides valuable insights into the role of television media in shaping tourism perceptions and behaviors among Chinese audiences.



### **3.7.5 Part 5: Additional Comments**

This section invited participants to write about "The influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations in China" to provide any additional comments or insights. The purpose is to collect the information that the respondents cannot fully express through the closed questions, to deeply understand the real thoughts and feelings of the respondents, and to find the relevant problems and phenomena omitted in the questionnaire.

## **3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

To ensure the rigor of this study on the influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, both reliability and validity checks are essential. These checks help confirm the accuracy, consistency, and relevance of the findings, supporting the study's conclusions about media exposure and audience engagement in China.

### **3.8.1 Reliability Checks**

Reliability testing was used to verify the consistency of the questionnaire results across multiple items and participants. In this study, internal consistency was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha for each questionnaire part, ensuring that items related to television media exposure, cognitive processing, and perceived appeal reliably measured the intended constructs.

In this study, the questionnaire were collected from 30 participants, and 30 of them effectively filled out the questionnaire. Through the collection and statistics of 30 questionnaires, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was calculated by SPSS, and the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of the three parts of the questionnaire was finally obtained as 0.842, 0.927 and 0.964. These three coefficients are all greater than 0.7, indicating that the questionnaire has high internal consistency and can reliably measure the research topic.

### 3.8.2 Validity Checks

Validity ensures that the questionnaire accurately measures what it is intended to measure, particularly regarding the influence of television media on destination perceptions. Three forms of validity were evaluated in this study.

This study ensured content validity, a crucial research element, by confirming that the measurement instruments accurately captured the intended constructs. Content validity was established through an expert review process focused on assessing questionnaire items related to media exposure, cognitive processing, and perceived appeal—key constructs for addressing the study's research questions about media influences on tourism marketing.

A panel of selected experts in media studies and tourism marketing provided detailed feedback on each questionnaire item's relevance and appropriateness. They reviewed whether the items effectively covered the intended constructs, such as the frequency and type of media exposure, cognitive interpretation of media messages, and the appeal generated by media content.

Experts evaluated each item for clarity, relevance, and coverage, ensuring accessibility to the target population and balance across all dimensions of each construct. They also recommended modifications to refine item focus and clarity, minimizing any overlap or ambiguity. This inputs guided revisions to improve the questionnaire's ability to capture nuanced insights into respondents' media habits, cognitive engagement, and perceptions related to tourism marketing, thereby enhancing the study's content validity.

Therefore, the validity checking results were reported in detail as follow.

The expert review process played a crucial role in ensuring the content validity of the questionnaire for this study on the influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations in China. The panel of

experts, consisting of specialists in media studies and tourism marketing, provided detailed and constructive feedback, which significantly enhanced the relevance and accuracy of the survey items. The experts affirmed that the questionnaire effectively covered the key constructions of media exposure, cognitive processing, and perceived appeal. They noted that the questions in Part 2: Television Media Exposure adequately captured various aspects of media exposure, such as frequency of television viewing, type of content consumed, and the perceived quality of information. The panel appreciated the inclusion of questions regarding the reliability and clarity of travel information presented on TV, as these items were considered essential for understanding how media influences travel decisions.

The experts highlighted that the majority of the items in the questionnaire were clear, relevant, and accessible to the target population. They particularly praised the use of simple language in Part 3: Cognitive Process, which allowed participants to easily express their views on how television programs influence their knowledge and perceptions of tourist destinations. Furthermore, the balance between multiple dimensions, such as the cultural understanding and emotional connection fostered by TV media, was well appreciated. The 5-point Likert scale used for assessing agreement levels was deemed suitable for capturing the degree of exposure and cognitive engagement with television media. The experts commended the scale for its ability to allow nuanced responses, providing insights into varying levels of influence. The panel noted that the scale would enable a thorough analysis of respondents' media consumption habits and cognitive processes in relation to tourism marketing.

While the overall structure and focus of the questionnaire were positively received, experts suggested some minor refinements to further enhance clarity and reduce potential overlap between items. For example, in Part 4: Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination, some experts recommended clarifying the difference between emotional appeal and cognitive engagement to ensure distinct measurement of each construct. They also suggested rewording a few questions to avoid ambiguity, which would help improve the respondents' understanding of the items. The inclusion of questions that explore both cognitive and emotional responses to television media was

highlighted as a strength. The experts noted that this dual focus would help capture a comprehensive understanding of how television influences not only the intellectual processing of information but also the emotional connections that drive travel decisions. They appreciated the thoroughness with which these dimensions were explored, with questions addressing both the cognitive impact of media (e.g., understanding the cultural and historical aspects of destinations) and the emotional appeal (e.g., the emotional connection evoked by the TV program).

Based on their expertise, the panel recommended a few adjustments to ensure that the questionnaire better captures the nuances of media influence. For instance, they suggested including an item to assess whether respondents actively seek travel information from TV media or passively receive it. Additionally, they recommended adding questions that would allow for differentiation between various types of television content, such as travel documentaries versus scripted TV series, which could provide deeper insights into how different formats influence travel decisions.

In conclusion, the expert review process has significantly strengthened the content validity of the questionnaire by confirming its alignment with the study's objectives and refining its ability to accurately measure media exposure, cognitive processing, and perceived appeal. The feedback from experts in media studies and tourism marketing has not only validated the relevance of the survey items but has also provided actionable recommendations to further enhance the questionnaire's clarity, precision, and capacity to capture nuanced data related to the influence of television media on tourism marketing. These improvements will ensure that the study effectively addresses its research questions and contributes valuable insights into the impact of media on consumer travel behavior.

## CHAPTER 4

### REASEARCH RESULTS

In this study on the influence of Television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived attractiveness of tourist destinations, the researchers adopted quantitative research methods, questionnaires and Wechat to collect data.

RQ 1: How does exposure to Chinese television media influence how viewers process information about tourist destinations?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations?

RQ 3: How does Chinese television media exposure influence on the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations?

The results of the data analysis can be presented as follows.

#### 4.1 PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PARTICIPANTS

Table 4.1 Shows the number and percentage of the sample by gender

Gender	Number (Person)	Percentage (%)
Male	207	51.75%
Female	193	48.25%
Total	400	100%

Table 4.1 shows that among the samples collected, 51.75% are male, 48.25% are female, and males account for the majority.



Table 4.2 Shows the number and percentage of the sample by age

Age	Number (Person)	Percentage (%)
Below 18 years old	67	16.75%
18-25 years old	153	38.25%
26-35 years old	114	28.5%
Above 35 years old	66	16.5%
Total	400	100%

According to Table 4.2, the sample population aged 18-25 is the largest, accounting for 38.25%. In addition, the sample population below 18 years old was 67, accounting for 16.75%; The sample population of 26-35 years old was 114, accounting for 28.5%; There are 66 people over 35 years old in the sample population, accounting for 16.5%, and the total sample population is 400 people.

Table 4.3 Shows the number and percentage of the education level

Age	Number (Person)	Percentage (%)
Bachelor's Degree	161	40.25%
Master's Degree	18	4.5%
Doctoral's Degree	12	3%
Others	209	52.25%
Total	400	100%

According to Table 4.3, the number of people with other education levels is the largest, 209 people in total, accounting for 52.25%. The sample number of bachelor's degree was 161, accounting for 40.25%; The sample number of people who obtained master's degree was 18, accounting for 4.5%; The sample number of doctoral degrees was 12, accounting for 3%.

Table 4.4 Show any travel experience in China in the past year

Travel Experience	Number (Person)	Percentage (%)
Yes	269	67.25%
No	131	32.75%
Total	400	100%

According to Table 4.4, among the 400 respondents, 269, accounting for 67.25%, had traveled to China in the past year. In addition, 131 respondents had no travel experience in China in the past year, accounting for 32.75%. The majority of people have travel experience in China.

Table 4.5 Shows the most frequently watched types of television programs

Type of Television Program	Number(Person)	Percentage (%)
Travel program	209	52.25%
Documentary	194	48.5%
News	190	47.5%
Television Series	291	72.75%
Others	181	45.25%
Total	400	100%

As can be seen from Table 4.5, among the multiple-choice TV programs that people watch most often, 209 people choose travel programs, accounting for 52.25%; 194 people chose documentaries, accounting for 48.5%; 190 people chose news, accounting for 47.5%; 291 people chose TV series, accounting for 72.75%; In the end, 181 people chose the other option, accounting for 45.25

## 4.2 PART 2: TELEVISION MEDIA EXPOSURE

Table 4.6 Shows the frequency and attitude of Television media use

Television Media Exposure	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
1. I have a certain TV viewing habit, and I watch a certain amount of TV every week.	107 (26.75)	121 (30.25)	90 (22.5)	37 (9.25)	45 (11.25)	3.52	1.28	Agree
2. I follow the recommendations or trends of Television shows to choose new content to watch.	24 (6)	99 (24.75)	150 (37.5)	108 (27)	19 (4.75)	3.00	0.97	Agree
3. I often watch travel programs or advertisements reported on TV programs.	26 (6.5)	90 (22.5)	146 (36.5)	115 (28.75)	23 (5.75)	3.05	1.00	Agree
4. I tend to get reliable travel information from TV programs.	31 (7.75)	78 (19.5)	149 (37.25)	115 (28.75)	27 (6.75)	3.07	1.03	Agree
5. Content in television programs is usually easier to understand and absorb than content in other media.	25 (6.25)	81 (20.25)	146 (36.5)	124 (31)	24 (6)	3.10	0.99	Agree
6. I think the tourist destination information presented by TV media is clear and easy to understand	30 (7.5)	85 (21.25)	155 (38.75)	103 (25.75)	27 (6.75)	3.03	1.02	Agree

Table 4.6 Shows the frequency and attitude of Television media use (Cont.)

Television Media Exposure	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
7. I think the picture quality of tourist destinations presented in TV media is very high.	26 (6.5)	96 (24)	142 (35.5)	112 (28)	24 (6)	3.03	1.01	Agree
8. I am interested in certain fields (such as travel, history, culture) because of the content shown on TV programs.	24 (6)	95 (23.75)	151 (37.75)	111 (27.75)	19 (4.75)	3.01	0.97	Agree
9. The content of the TV program inspires me to want to share or discuss with others.	23 (5.75)	106 (26.5)	154 (38.5)	99 (24.75)	18 (4.5)	2.96	0.96	Agree
10. The information in the TV program makes me feel that it is worth further understanding or trying.	20 (5)	109 (27.25)	145 (36.25)	96 (24)	30 (7.5)	3.02	1.01	Agree
Total Average						3.07	1.02	Agree

As can be seen from Table 4.6, the average agreement level of the sample group on the frequency and attitude of TV media use is 3.07. Watching a certain amount of TV per week had the highest average score, with an average of 3.52. The second is that content from TV shows is generally easier to understand and absorb than content from other media, with an average of 3.10. This was followed by a tendency to get reliable travel information from TV shows, with an average of 3.07. Often watched ads on travel shows or TV shows, with an average of 3.05. The tourist destination information presented by TV media is clear and easy to understand, and the average value is 3.03. In my opinion, the picture quality of tourist destinations presented by TV media is very

high, with an average of 3.03. The information in the TV show made me feel that it was worth learning more or trying, with an average of 3.02. In some areas (such as travel, history, culture), the average is 3.01 because of the content presented by TV programs. Select new content to watch based on the show's recommendations or trends, with an average of 3. The content of TV shows inspires me to want to share or discuss with others, with an average of 2.96.

### 4.3 PART 3: COGNITIVE PROCESS

Table 4.7 Shows the influence of Television media exposure on the cognitive process of tourist destination

Cognitive Process	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
1. My knowledge of the tourist destination has increased through the television media.	20 (5)	116 (29)	137 (34.25)	102 (25.5)	25 (6.25)	2.99	0.99	Agree
2. TV programs are one of my main sources of travel information.	17 (4.25)	98 (24.5)	152 (38)	105 (26.25)	28 (7)	3.07	0.98	Agree
3. Compared to other sources of information (such as social media or recommendations from friends), TV media has a greater influence on my choice of travel destination.	26 (6.5)	96 (24)	148 (37)	113 (28.25)	17 (4.25)	3.00	0.98	Agree
4. TV programs help me better understand the cultural background and customs of the destination.	26 (6.5)	104 (26)	155 (38.75)	97 (24.25)	18 (4.5)	2.94	0.97	Agree



Table 4.7 Shows the influence of Television media exposure on the cognitive process of tourist destination (Cont.)

Cognitive Process	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
5. Through the media of television, I gained a deeper understanding of the natural landscape and human history of the destination.	21 (5.25)	106 (26.5)	137 (34.25)	113 (28.25)	23 (5.75)	3.03	0.99	Agree
6. The display of the television media made me feel that the destination was a place worth visiting.	31 (7.75)	91 (22.75)	144 (36)	118 (29.5)	16 (4)	2.99	0.99	Agree
7. The content of the television media gives me a concrete visual and auditory impression of the destination.	33 (8.25)	82 (20.5)	138 (34.5)	119 (29.75)	28 (7)	3.07	1.05	Agree
8. Through the medium of television, it is easier for me to identify the uniqueness and difference of the destination.	23 (5.75)	104 (26)	143 (35.75)	110 (27.5)	20 (5)	3.00	0.98	Agree
9. Television media can show us the characteristics and advantages of the destination more directly.	23 (5.75)	97 (24.25)	149 (37.25)	107 (26.75)	24 (6)	3.03	0.99	Agree
10. Tourism related TV shows about various destinations, can meet our different travel demand.	31 (7.75)	82 (20.5)	147 (36.75)	112 (28)	28 (7)	3.06	1.04	Agree
Total Average						3.02	0.99	Agree

As can be seen from Table 4.7, the average agreement level on the impact of TV media exposure on the cognitive process of tourist destinations is 3.02. TV programs are one of the main sources of tourist information, and the content of TV media makes me have a specific visual and auditory impression of the destination with the highest average score of 3.07. Secondly, tourism related TV programs introduce various tourist destinations, which can meet our different tourism needs, and the average value is 3.06. Through the medium of television, I gained a deeper understanding of the natural landscape and human history of my destination, with an average of 3.03. TV media can more directly show us the characteristics and advantages of the destination, with an average of 3.03. Compared with other information sources (such as social media or recommendations from friends), TV media has a greater influence on my choice of travel destination, with an average of 3. Through the medium of television, I can more easily identify the uniqueness and difference of the destination, with an average of 3. The presentation of the TV media makes me feel that the destination is a place worth visiting, with an average of 2.99. Through TV media, my knowledge of tourist destinations increased, with an average of 2.99. The TV program helped me better understand the cultural background and customs of the destination, with an average of 2.94.

#### 4.4 PART 4: PERCEIVED APPEAL OF TOURIST DESTINATION

Table 4.8 Shows the impact of TV media exposure on viewers' perceived appeal

Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
1. Television programs about tourist destinations stimulate my interest in traveling.	24 (6)	97 (24.25)	136 (34)	126 (31.5)	17 (4.25)	3.04	0.98	Agree

Table 4.8 Shows the impact of TV media exposure on viewers' perceived appeal (Cont.)

Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
2. After watching travel-related TV programs, I usually choose that destination as the place to travel.	25 (6.25)	91 (22.75)	136 (34)	125 (31.25)	23 (5.75)	3.08	1.01	Agree
3. The TV program added to my credibility and security about the destination.	22 (5.5)	88 (22)	163 (40.75)	112 (28)	15 (3.75)	3.03	0.93	Agree
4. The TV program made me think of the destination as an attractive travel option.	26 (6.5)	97 (24.25)	157 (39.25)	99 (24.75)	21 (5.25)	2.98	0.98	Agree
5. The television media increased my interest in the destination and stimulated my desire to go there.	27 (6.75)	101 (25.25)	146 (36.5)	96 (24)	30 (7.5)	3.00	1.03	Agree
6. The scene presented by the TV program made me feel that the atmosphere of the destination was unique and attractive.	23 (5.75)	96 (24)	153 (38.25)	110 (27.5)	18 (4.5)	3.01	0.96	Agree
7. The emotional expressions in TV programs (such as the guests' feelings, story narration) enhance my emotional connection to the destination.	34 (8.5)	93 (23.25)	137 (34.25)	117 (29.25)	19 (4.75)	2.99	1.03	Agree
8. The activities and scenes in the TV program added to my good feelings about the destination.	28 (7)	83 (20.75)	150 (37.5)	120 (30)	19 (4.75)	3.05	0.99	Agree

Table 4.8 Shows the impact of TV media exposure on viewers' perceived appeal (Cont.)

Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination	Agreement Level					$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level Of Agreement
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low			
9. The promotion of the TV media makes me feel that the destination provides a rich tourist experience and perfect tourist facilities	30 (7.5)	82 (20.5)	146 (36.5)	119 (29.75)	23 (5.75)	3.06	1.02	Agree
10. When I watch a TV show about a certain travel destination, I often feel an emotional connection.	20 (5)	108 (27)	157 (39.25)	91 (22.75)	24 (6)	2.98	0.97	Agree
Total Average						3.02	0.99	Agree

As can be seen from Table 4.8, the average agreement level of the impact of TV media exposure on viewers' perceived appeal is 3.02. After watching travel-related TV shows, I would usually pick that destination as the place to travel with the highest average score of 3.08. Secondly, the propaganda of TV media makes me feel that the destination provides rich tourist experience and perfect tourist facilities, and the average value is 3.06. This was followed by activities and scenes from TV shows that increased my good feelings about my destination, with an average of 3.05. TV programs about tourist destinations stimulated my interest in travel, and the average was 3.04. This TV show increased my trust and security in my destination with an average of 3.03. The scene presented by the TV program makes me feel that the atmosphere of the destination is unique and attractive with an average of 3.01. Television media increased my interest in the destination and stimulated my desire to go there, with an average of 3. The emotional expression of the TV show (such as the feelings of the guests, the narration of the story) enhanced my emotional connection with the destination, with an average of 2.99. This TV show makes me think this destination is an attractive travel option with an average of 2.98. When I watch a TV show about a certain travel destination, I often feel an emotional connection, averaging 2.98.

## 4.5 PART 5: HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

In this study, it proposed the following hypotheses to examine the effects of TV media exposure on Chinese audiences' cognitive processing and the perceived attractiveness of tourist destinations.

The following is a detailed analysis of the three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Exposure to Chinese television media significantly influences how viewers process information about tourist destinations.

The analysis strongly supports Hypothesis 1 (H1), indicating that exposure to Chinese television media significantly influences how viewers process information about tourist destinations. The Pearson correlation coefficient between TV media exposure and cognitive processing is 0.905 ( $p < 0.01$ ), demonstrating a strong positive correlation. Furthermore, regression analysis reveals an  $R^2$  value of 0.819, meaning that 81.9% of the variance in cognitive processing is explained by TV media exposure, confirming a strong model fit. The F-value of 1802.47 ( $p < 0.001$ ) further validates the statistical significance of the regression model, and the regression sum of squares (160.558) accounts for most of the total sum of squares (196.010), suggesting that the model effectively explains variations in cognitive processing. Additionally, the standard error of 0.29846 indicates a relatively small margin of error, and collinearity diagnostics show no issues (tolerance = 1, VIF = 1). The regression equation  $Y = 0.844X + 0.420$  confirms that increased exposure to television media leads to enhanced cognitive processing of tourist destinations. Based on these findings, Hypothesis 1 is accepted, as the results provide strong evidence that TV media exposure plays a crucial role in shaping how audiences process information about tourism.

The information of this hypothesis 1 testing details was presented as follows.



Table 4.9 Shows the Pearson Correlation Table of Television Media Exposure and Cognitive Processing

		Television Media Exposure	Cognitive Processing
Television Media Exposure	Person Correlation	1	0.905
	Sig.(2-tailed)		<.001
	N	400	400
Cognitive Processing	Person Correlation	0.905	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	400	400

Table 4.9 presents the Pearson Correlation analysis between Television Media Exposure and Cognitive Processing, providing statistical evidence of their relationship. The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.905$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) indicates a strong positive correlation between the two variables, suggesting that as exposure to Chinese television media increases, cognitive processing of tourist destinations also improves. The significance value ( $p < 0.001$ ) confirms that this correlation is statistically significant, meaning the likelihood of this relationship occurring by chance is extremely low. With a sample size of 400 participants, the results further reinforce the reliability of the findings. These results support the hypothesis that television media exposure significantly influences how viewers process information about tourist destinations, emphasizing the media's role in shaping audience perceptions and engagement with tourism-related content.

Table 4.10 Shows the Model Summary of Television Media Exposure and Cognitive Processing, ANOVA and correlation tables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	Df1	Df2	Sig.F Change	
1	0.905	0.819	0.819	0.29846	0.819	1802.457	1	398	<0.001	1.891

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	160.558	1	160.558	1802.457	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	35.453	398	0.089		
Total	196.010	399			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.420	0.063		6.665	<	0.296	0.544		
Television Media Exposure	0.844	0.020	0.905	42.455	0.001	0.883	0.883	1.000	1.000

Table 4.10 provides a comprehensive statistical summary of the relationship between Television Media Exposure and Cognitive Processing, further validating Hypothesis 1 (H1): Exposure to Chinese television media significantly influences how viewers process information about tourist destinations.

#### Model Summary and ANOVA Results

The R-value (0.905) suggests a strong positive correlation between television media exposure and cognitive processing, indicating that as television media exposure increases, cognitive processing also improves. The R Square (0.819) means that 81.9% of the variation in cognitive processing is explained by television media exposure,

demonstrating a high explanatory power of the model. The Adjusted R Square (0.819) confirms the model's stability even when accounting for additional predictor variables.

The standard error of the estimate (0.29846) represents the average error in predicting cognitive processing levels, suggesting a highly precise model. The F-value (1802.457,  $p < 0.001$ ) from the ANOVA test indicates that the regression model is highly significant, confirming that television media exposure has a statistically significant impact on cognitive processing. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.891) suggests no significant autocorrelation, ensuring the model's reliability.

#### Regression Coefficients and Collinearity Statistics

The regression equation derived from the coefficients is  $Y = 0.844X + 0.420$ , where X represents Television Media Exposure and Y represents Cognitive Processing. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.844$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) shows that for every one-unit increase in television media exposure, cognitive processing increases by 0.844 units, indicating a strong predictive effect. The standardized beta coefficient ( $Beta = 0.905$ ) reinforces this strong positive relationship.

The confidence interval (0.296 to 0.544 for the constant and 0.883 to 0.883 for television media exposure) indicates a narrow and precise estimate, further supporting the reliability of the findings. The collinearity statistics show a Tolerance of 1.000 and VIF of 1.000, confirming that there is no multicollinearity and that the independent variable is not highly correlated with other predictors, ensuring the validity of the regression results.

Overall, these findings provide strong empirical support for Hypothesis 1 (H1), confirming that exposure to Chinese television media significantly enhances how viewers process information about tourist destinations. The model explains a substantial portion (81.9%) of the variance in cognitive processing, and the statistical significance of the regression analysis underscores the important role of television media in shaping audience perceptions and engagement with tourism-related content.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations.

Based on the statistical analysis, Hypothesis 2 (H2)—which proposes that there is a significant relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations—is accepted.

The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.883$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) demonstrates a strong positive correlation between television media exposure and perceived attractiveness of tourist destinations, indicating that increased exposure to Chinese television media is associated with a higher perception of tourism appeal. Additionally, the regression analysis results ( $R^2 = 0.780$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.779$ ) confirm that 78.0% of the variance in perceived attractiveness can be explained by television media exposure, signifying a strong model fit.

The standard error of 0.33398 suggests a relatively small prediction error, reinforcing the model's reliability. The ANOVA results ( $F = 1407.933$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) confirm that the regression model is statistically significant. Furthermore, the collinearity statistics (Tolerance = 1, VIF = 1) indicate no collinearity issues, ensuring the robustness of the findings.

The regression equation ( $Y = 0.835X + 0.450$ ) provides strong empirical evidence that higher television media exposure positively predicts increased perceptions of tourist destination attractiveness. These findings affirm that Chinese television media plays a crucial role in shaping audience perceptions of tourism appeal, reinforcing the importance of media exposure in influencing tourism-related decision-making.

The information of this hypothesis 2 testing details was presented as follows.

Table 4.11 Shows the Pearson Correlation Table of Television Media Exposure and Perceived appeal

		Television Media Exposure	Perceived Appeal
Television Media Exposure	Person Correlation	1	0.883
	Sig.(2-tailed)		<.001
	N	400	400
Perceived Appeal	Person Correlation	0.883	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	400	400

Table 4.11 presents the Pearson correlation analysis between television media exposure and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations, revealing a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.883$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) indicates a statistically significant association, confirming that the observed relationship is unlikely to be due to random chance. With a sample size of 400 for both variables, the analysis is robust and reliable, further strengthening the validity of the findings. The high correlation value suggests that increased exposure to Chinese television media corresponds with higher perceptions of the attractiveness of tourist destinations, reinforcing the influential role of media in shaping viewers' travel perceptions.

Table 4.12 Shows the Model Summary, ANOVA and correlation table of Television Media Exposure and Perceived Appeal

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	Df1	Df2	Sig.F Change	
1	0.883	0.780	0.779	0.33398	0.780	1407.933	1	398	<0.001	1.720



Table 4.12 Shows the Model Summary, ANOVA and correlation table of Television Media Exposure and Perceived Appeal (Cont.)

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	157.041	1	157.041	1407.933	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	44.393	398	0.112		
Total	201.434	399			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.450	0.070		6.387	<0.001	0.312	0.589		
Television Media Exposure	0.835	0.022	0.883	37.522	<0.001	0.791	0.878	1.000	1.000

Table 4.12 provides further insights into the relationship between television media exposure and perceived appeal through regression analysis, demonstrating the predictive strength of media exposure on viewers' perceptions. The model summary reveals a strong correlation ( $R = 0.883$ ) and a high  $R$  Square value (0.780), indicating that 78.0% of the variance in perceived appeal is explained by television media exposure. The slight difference between  $R^2$  and the adjusted  $R^2$  (0.779) confirms the model's robustness even after adjusting for predictors, while the standard error of the estimate (0.33398) suggests reliable predictions with minimal deviations from actual values. The Durbin-Watson statistic (1.720) indicates no significant autocorrelation, further supporting the validity of the regression model. The ANOVA analysis reinforces these findings, with a highly significant F-value (1407.933,  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that television media exposure significantly predicts perceived appeal. Additionally, the regression sum of squares (157.041) greatly exceeds the residual sum of squares (44.393), demonstrating that most of the variation in perceived appeal is explained by the model. The regression equation,  $\text{Perceived Appeal} = 0.835 \times \text{Television Media Exposure} + 0.450$ , indicates that for every one-unit increase in media exposure, perceived appeal increases by 0.835. The unstandardized coefficient for television media exposure ( $B = 0.835$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) confirms a strong and statistically significant

positive effect, while the constant ( $B = 0.450$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) represents the baseline perceived appeal in the absence of media exposure. Lastly, collinearity statistics (Tolerance = 1, VIF = 1) confirm the absence of multicollinearity issues, ensuring the stability and reliability of the regression model.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Chinese television media exposure significantly influences the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

Hypothesis 3 posits that Chinese television media exposure significantly influences the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. The findings strongly support this hypothesis. The results show that television media exposure has a positive impact on both cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. Specifically, higher levels of TV media exposure lead to deeper cognitive engagement, which facilitates better information processing, memory retention, and knowledge acquisition.

The data further demonstrate that TV media exposure enhances the emotional and aesthetic aspects of perception, which are crucial for how viewers perceive the appeal of tourist destinations. This is largely due to the way television media conveys cultural identity and evokes emotional resonance, which deepens the connection between cognitive processing and the perception of appeal.

The strong correlations and significant regression outcomes confirm the positive influence of television media exposure on both cognitive processing and perceived appeal, highlighting the critical role that media plays in shaping how audiences perceive and make decisions about tourist destinations. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is accepted, as the results clearly indicate that television media exposure significantly influences the relationship between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND SUGGESTIONS**

This chapter summarizes the research by synthesizing the research results and discusses the influence of TV media exposure on the cognitive process and perceived attractiveness of tourist destinations from various aspects. This study focuses on the relationship between Chinese TV media exposure on audience cognitive information processing and tourist destination perceived attractiveness, and how it affects the relationship between cognitive processing and perceived attractiveness. Finally, this chapter also reflects that the survey results can have a more long-term impact on tourism destination, which can help the tourism industry to use resources more effectively and promote the sustainable development of the tourism market.

#### **5.1 CONCLUSION OF RESULTS**

This study takes the influence of Chinese TV media exposure on tourist cognitive processing and perceived appeal as the theme to explore the influence of Chinese TV media exposure on tourist cognitive processing and perceived appeal. Through quantitative research method and questionnaire survey, data of participants from different groups were obtained, which provided strong evidence for this study. From the questionnaires collected in this study, it can be seen that the study participants were mostly male, mainly aged between 18 and 35, and most of them had travel experience in China in the past year. Among them, travel shows and TV dramas are the main programs they watch. This also shows that TV media has a greater impact on the travel intentions of this age group. The study analyzed viewers' TV media exposure habits, cognitive processing, and their perceived appeal to travel destinations.

RO 1: To explore the influence of exposure to Chinese television media on viewers process information about tourist destinations.

TV media plays a very important role in the cognitive processing of the audience. Television media attract the audience's attention through visual and auditory stimulation, and enhance the audience's memory and understanding of information through high-quality pictures and narratives. Long-term and frequent exposure to the positive information conveyed by TV media can continuously enhance the audience's favorable impression of the destination. The content created by TV media shapes the cognition of the destination by influencing the audience's attention, memory and analysis ability, and this cognitive processing is the key to forming a positive impression of the tourist destination. At the same time, emotional resonance will also significantly affect the audience's perception of the tourist destination. For example, destinations with exciting or challenging entertainment elements are more likely to spark travel interest among many audiences who enjoy adventure and challenge. The results show that strong TV media exposure has a greater impact on the cognitive process of tourist destinations, and TV media exposure can promote deeper cognitive participation, thus promoting better information processing, memory retention and knowledge acquisition. At the same time, TV media exposure also contributes to emotional perception and aesthetic perception, and enhances the information processing of tourist destinations through cultural identity and emotional resonance.

RO 2: To investigate the relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations.

As a powerful communication medium, television can create engaging images and emotional experiences through the combination of visual and auditory, which can influence the perceived appeal of the audience to the tourist destination. Television media conveys various information by displaying images, stories and plots of tourist destinations, and the audience will be affected by perceptual conventions in the process of perception. Through the repeated display of the image of a certain tourist destination, the TV media shapes the image of the destination, so that the audience forms a certain expectation and love for it. When they are exposed to destination-related ads or programs in the future, their perceived routine makes it easier for them to accept and identify with the intended destination image. In daily life, different audiences have

different motivations for travel, and TV media can cater to their expectations by showing tourist destinations that meet the audience's motivations, thus enhancing the perceived appeal of destinations. At the same time, the image of tourist destination in TV media often has a strong cultural and social background color. The audience will selectively interpret the tourist destination information according to the influence of their own cultural background and social environment. The cultural background of the audience may affect their perception of the tourist destination presented by the television media. In short, television media greatly affects the audience's cognition and perception of tourist destinations through the transmission of visual, sound and emotional content.

RO 3: To analyze how Chinese television media exposure influence on the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

Television media exposure has a positive impact on cognitive processing through visual and auditory stimulation, and thus on the perceived appeal of tourist destinations. Higher television media exposure contributes to deeper cognitive engagement, which promotes better information processing, memory retention, and knowledge acquisition. At the same time, TV media exposure contributes to emotional and aesthetic perception, enhancing the appeal of tourist destinations through cultural identity and emotional resonance.

Overall, the study confirms that TV media exposure has a greater impact on the cognitive processes and perceived appeal of tourist destinations, especially for viewers aged 18-35 who enjoy traveling and have a habit of watching TV. These results emphasize that television media, as an important tool to shape the tourism market, can optimize the promotion strategy of tourism destinations, stimulate the actual tourism behavior of the audience, and become an important power source to promote the development of tourism destinations.



## 5.2 DISCUSSION

RO 1: To explore the influence of exposure to Chinese television media on viewers process information about tourist destinations.

With the development of digital media in recent years, although TV media is faced with the challenge of reducing the number of fixed users, it still has unique advantages in covering a wide population and providing in-depth narrative content. For example, the use of high-level visual effects and professional narration in the production of the program helps the audience form deeper memories and emotional connections. Television media also, due to its high exposure rate of repeated broadcasts, can establish a mental framework that affects how viewers process new information (Atkin, 2010). The more frequently the audience watch travel programs or advertisements, the more positive their cognition of the destination. The familiarity brought by frequent contact with the destination can help the audience reduce uncertainty, thus enhancing the cognitive attraction of the destination and increasing the actual willingness to travel (Shoemaker & Danisewitz, 2009). At the same time, different people can also have different cognitive understanding through TV media. Demographic characteristics such as age, interest and travel experience regulate the influence of TV media content on cognition. For example, young audiences are more inclined to get novel and exciting travel inspiration and experience from TV programs, while older audiences pay more attention to the cultural depth of destinations (Shrum, 2009). With strong emotional and visual transmission capabilities, TV media can present the beauty and uniqueness of the destination to the audience through narrative and image. High-quality visual and narrative content can trigger deeper cognitive processing, and complex and exquisite content can attract more cognitive resources, thus affecting the depth of audience's information processing (Lang, 2000). This study verifies that TV media can not only stimulate the audience's interest in the destination in the short term, but also form a lasting good impression on the audience through long-term repeated exposure. High-quality programs can not only attract the audience's attention, but also strengthen the memory of the tourist destination through deep cognitive processing. Television media attract the audience's attention through bright pictures, dynamic scenes and emotional

narration, so that the audience can give priority to the information related to the tourist destination in the information input stage (Zillmann, 2000). This finding is consistent with the cognitive processing theory, and emphasizes the influence of information input and processing depth on long-term memory and attitude formation.

RO 2: To investigate the relationship between Chinese television media exposure and viewers' perceptions of the appeal of tourist destinations.

At the same time, TV media has narrowed the emotional distance between the audience and the destination by shaping emotional resonance. The study found that emotionally driven content not only enhances the perceived appeal of a destination, but also promotes viewers' actual travel behavioral intentions. This is especially reflected in the narrative and visual elements of the program, arousing the audience's yearning and curiosity for the tourist destination, which also reveals the complex relationship between information dissemination and audience cognitive processing, and provides a theoretical basis for optimizing the content design of tourism media. In addition, television media has a significant impact on audience perception through visual and auditory stimuli, especially in the aspects of natural landscape, history and culture, and entertainment activities. Perception is a direct response to the characteristics of the environment, and media enhances this response through a rich and authentic pictorial sense (Gibson, 1966). In daily life, the TV media conveys information to the audience by displaying images, plots, pictures and other information of the tourist destination, and the audience will also be affected by the perception convention in the process of perception. The TV media creates the brand image of the tourist destination in the eyes of the audience by repeatedly displaying a certain feature of the tourist destination (Entman, 1993). This makes the audience have a positive attitude towards the destination in their subconscious mind. When they are exposed to images or words related to the destination in the future, the perception will lead them to trust and choose the expected destination more easily. Television media stimulate the audience's emotional response through emotional narratives in TV programs, thereby increasing the attractiveness of destinations, such as showing the audience parent-child trips in certain tourist destinations.

RO 3: To analyze how Chinese television media exposure influence on the connection between cognitive processing and the perceived appeal of tourist destinations.

For a long time, television media has been regarded as the key medium to shape the audience's concept and influence the behavior. In the existing studies, although there have been studies on the impact of media exposure on the image of tourist destinations, few studies have distinguished the specific mechanism of cognitive process and perceived attractiveness. This study not only verifies the different influences of media exposure on the two, but also reveals that TV, as a traditional media, still has a unique communication effect in the digital age, and emphasizes the important role of TV media as a marketing tool for the tourism industry. For the media industry, this study has certain research value. In the future development, TV media can further design differentiated content according to the interest and cultural background of the target audience, while emphasizing multi-sensory stimulation and emotional narration to enhance the attraction of the destination and highlight the uniqueness of the tourist destination. In the face of the development of digital media, encouraging the use of new technologies to enrich sensory input, enhance the audience's overall perception of the destination, and increase the audience's sense of immersive experience can also promote the long-term stable development of tourist destinations.

Overall, this study reveals the key role of television media in the cognitive shaping process of tourism destinations and the enhancement of perceived attractiveness. This provides theoretical support for the optimization of tourism marketing strategy, and also lays a foundation for further exploration of the interactive relationship between media and tourism.

## **5.3 SUGGESTION**

### **5.3.1 Suggestion from this Study**

5.3.1.1 In view of the loss of regular viewers in recent years, TV media can design diversified program content according to the age, gender and interest differences of viewers. For example, by producing more fashionable and interactive programs for younger audiences and content emphasizing cultural heritage and historical depth for older audiences, this differentiation strategy can more effectively attract the attention of different groups and increase the durability of the development of television media.

5.3.1.2 Although television still has unique advantages, digital media has gained momentum in recent years, and combining digital platforms can help expand the effectiveness of the promotion of tourist destinations. For example, Posting highlights from TV shows to social media platforms can attract more potential viewers and further enhance the exposure of tourist destinations.

5.3.1.3 In recent years, the development trend of China's tourism market is good, and many cities have become popular places for tourism. Continuous media exposure can help enhance the permanence of the image of tourist destinations. Therefore, it is recommended that the tourism sector cooperate with the television media to develop a long-term publicity plan, clarify the publicity tasks and objectives of different cycles, and ensure that the audience can continue to access the relevant content of the destination, so as to strengthen the brand impression.

5.3.1.4 Improve the production quality of TV programs, focusing on narrative structure and picture expressiveness. Showcase the unique charm of the destination through high-quality visual and aural elements and engaging story content, such as distinctive natural landscapes, historical heritage and local entertainment.

### **5.3.2 Suggestion for Further Study**

5.3.2.1 According to the characteristics of tourist destinations and audience needs in recent years, more attractive TV media content is designed, the

structure of TV programs is optimized, the distance between the audience is narrowed, and the audience's immersive experience is increased by using high-quality visual presentation.

5.3.2.2 Use celebrity effect and brand linkage to enhance the awareness and attractiveness of the destination, by inviting well-known actors, travel bloggers or Olympic champions to participate in the shooting of destination promotional videos, through their influence to attract more audiences. In addition, cooperation with popular brands or movies, film and television works can further expand the influence of the tourist destination.

5.3.2.3 In the process of development, the concept of sustainable development of the tourist destination is promoted through television media, and the concept of sustainable tourism is integrated into the media publicity content, showing how the tourist destination protects natural resources and supports the development of local communities. This will not only attract tourists who care about environmental protection and social values, but also enhance the brand image of the destination and promote the long-term development of the tourism destination.

5.3.2.4 Relevant tourism management departments and media organizations cooperate to optimize communication strategies through data analysis, using audience viewing data and tourist behavior data to evaluate the actual effects of TV media exposure. For example, analyzing and evaluating changes in destination related search volumes, social media engagement rates, and visitor visits to continually adjust communication content and strategies.



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**APPENDIX**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

## Questionnaire

### Instructions

Thank you for participating in the investigation "The influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations in China". The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of Chinese television media on the audience's cognitive process and perceived appeal of travel-related information.

### Part 1: Demographics of the Participants

Instructions: Please mark a  $\checkmark$  in the space that best corresponds to the truth.

#### 1. Sex

☐ Male      ☐ Female      ☐ Others

#### 2. Age

☐ Below 18 years old    ☐ 18-25 years old    ☐ 26-35 years old  
☐ Above 35 years old

#### 3. Educational level

☐ Bachelor's Degree    ☐ Master's Degree    ☐ Doctoral Degree  
☐ Others

#### 4. Have you had any travel experience in China in the past year?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

#### 5. What type of TV program do you watch most often?

☐ Travel program    ☐ Documentary films    ☐ News  
☐ TV series      ☐ Others

## Part 2: Television Media Exposure

Instructions: Please mark a  $\checkmark$  in the black space that best corresponds to the truth.

Television Media Exposure	Agreement Level				
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low
1. I have a certain TV viewing habit, and I watch a certain amount of TV every week.					
2. I follow the recommendations or trends of Television shows to choose new content to watch.					
3. I often watch travel programs or advertisements reported on TV programs.					
4. I tend to get reliable travel information from TV programs.					
5. Content in television programs is usually easier to understand and absorb than content in other media.					
6. I think the tourist destination information presented by TV media is					

clear and easy to understand					
7. I think the picture quality of tourist destinations presented in TV media is very high.					
8. I am interested in certain fields (such as travel, history, culture) because of the content shown on TV programs.					
9. The content of the TV program inspires me to want to share or discuss with others.					
10. The information in the TV program makes me feel that it is worth further understanding or trying.					

### Part 3: Cognitive Process

Instructions: Please mark a √ in the blank space that best corresponds to the truth.

Cognitive Process	Agreement Level				
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low
1. My knowledge of the tourist destination has increased through the television media.					
2. TV programs are one of my main sources of travel information.					
3. Compared to other sources of information (such as social media or recommendations from friends), TV media has a greater influence on my choice of travel destination.					
4. TV programs help me better understand the cultural background and customs of the destination.					
5. Through the media of television, I gained a deeper understanding of the natural landscape and human history of the					



Cognitive Process	Agreement Level				
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low
destination.					
6. The display of the television media made me feel that the destination was a place worth visiting.					
7. The content of the television media gives me a concrete visual and auditory impression of the destination.					
8. Through the medium of television, it is easier for me to identify the uniqueness and difference of the destination.					
9. Television media can show us the characteristics and advantages of the destination more directly.					
10. Tourism related TV shows about various destinations, can meet our different travel demand.					

#### Part 4: Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination

Instructions: Please mark a √ in the black space that best corresponds to the truth.

Perceived Appeal of Tourist Destination	Agreement Level				
	5 Highest	4 High	3 Medium	2 Low	1 Very Low
1. Television programs about tourist destinations stimulate my interest in traveling.					
2. After watching travel-related TV programs, I usually choose that destination as the place to travel.					
3. The TV program added to my credibility and security about the destination.					
4. The TV program made me think of the destination as an attractive travel option.					
5. The television media increased my interest in the destination and stimulated my desire to go there.					
6. The scene presented by the TV program made me feel that the atmosphere of the destination was unique and attractive.					
7. The emotional expressions in TV programs (such as the					

guests' feelings, story narration) enhance my emotional connection to the destination.					
8. The activities and scenes in the TV program added to my good feelings about the destination.					
9. The promotion of the TV media makes me feel that the destination provides a rich tourist experience and perfect tourist facilities					
10. When I watch a TV show about a certain travel destination, I often feel an emotional connection.					

**Part 5: Additional Comments**

Please use this space to provide any additional comments or insights on “The influence of television media exposure on cognitive processing and perceived appeal of tourist destinations in China”.

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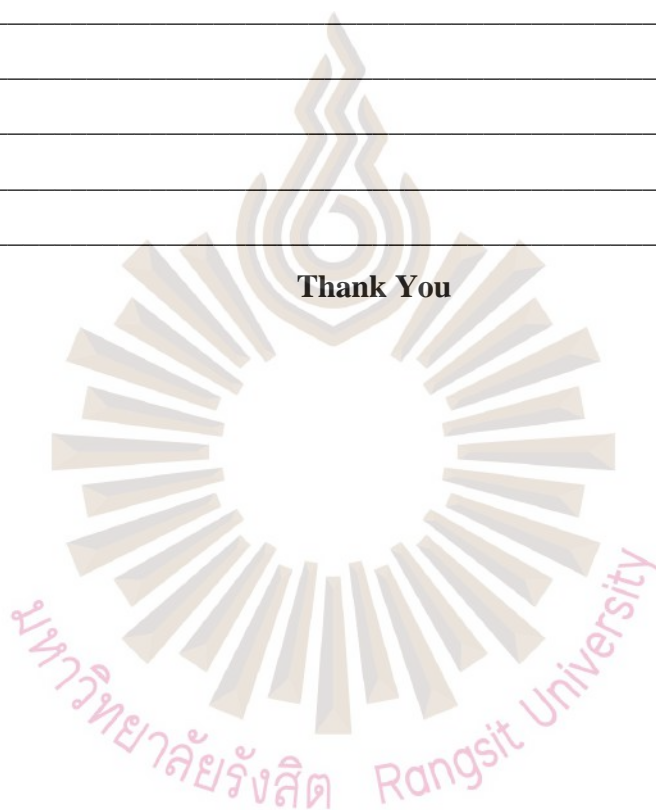
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**Thank You**



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